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ABSTRACT

This research bulletin provides criteria and procedures for determining the readiness of children to enter kindergarten early. The first section of the bulletin reviews the results of a literature search conducted to delineate areas of development from which admissions criteria should be defined. The review of the literature disclosed the following areas for developing early admission criteria: chronological age; social-emotional, physical and conceptual development; and language skills. The second section delineates a readiness evaluation procedure. Related materials, such as sample letters to parents and guidelines for parent teacher conferences, are appended. (Author/RH)

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DEVELOPMENT OF A READINESS EVALUATION PROCEDURE FOR EARLY ADMISSIONS TO KINDERGARTEN

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RESEARCH BULLETIN

DEVELOPMENT OF A READINESS EVALUATION PROCEDURE FOR EARLY ADMISSIONS TO KINDERGARTEN

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The district criteria and procedures for early entrance to kindergarten were developed in compliance with section 232.04 Florida Statutes as a cooperative effort between personnel representing the Lee County District School Board and the University of South Florida.

In writing the procedures, frequent reference was made to the publication, Early Admission to First Grade Readiness Evaluation Procedure, issued by the State of Florida, Department of Education.

The authors wish to thank all of those involved during the development of the procedures and to acknowledge the support and approval of Mr. Ray Pottorf, Superintendent of the Lee County School District, Dr. Charles Godwin, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, and the members of the Lee County District School Board:

Mrs. Rayma C. Page, Chairman
Robert L. Ratliff, III
John T. Beckett
Howard DeVore
John William Mills

F.E.R.D.C. NOTES ON THIS BULLETIN

The Florida Educational Research and Development Council, has sought to fund research which has practical value to school districts. It has attempted to publish bulletins which are germane to public school needs and interests. The majority of our past research and bulletin publications have emanated from our university colleagues who were conducting research in and with public school districts. The value of such bulletins to school districts of course vary not only from district to district but, also to the degree such research findings can be successfully implemented in a local school district. There is ample evidence that this research has influenced school programs perhaps over a period of time rather than having an immediate impact.

This bulletin is different. It can be implemented immediately by any school system or school facing the problem of admission to Kindergarten. Based upon a sound research of the literature concerning early childhood education, the criteria for early entrance to Kindergarten are sound, defensible, and applicable. Futhermore, it represents a collaborative effort between a public school's district and its regional university which could and should develop in all sections of Florida. Authors Ms. Nancy Adams, Dr. Carroll Cave, Ms. Patti Van der Have, and Dr. Jay Lutz of the Lee County School District along with Dr. Carolyn Spillman of the University of South Florida are to be commended for this contribution to education.

Charlie T. Council
Executive Secretary.

DEVELOPMENT OF A READINESS EVALUATION PROCEDURE FOR EARLY ADMISSIONS TO KINDERGARTEN

The impetus for the development of a readiness evaluation procedure for early admissions to kindergarten came as a result of a change in the Florida Statutes. A section of the Statutes was amended to change the age at which a child is eligible for admission to public kindergarten from January 1 to December 1 of the school year. However, stipulated in the amendment is the provision for any child, whose fifth birthday falls subsequent to December 1 but prior to January 1, to be admitted to kindergarten during the first month of school provided the child has demonstrated a readiness to enter kindergarten in accordance with criteria established by the local school district.

Determining Areas of Criteria

The initial task in developing criteria for admission to kindergarten was to search and review the educational literature. The results of the literature search are reviewed in the following discussion.

Much of the literature reflected an interest in the optimum chronological age for beginning school and implications of various entrance ages on social-emotional behavior and future academic success.

Therefore, even though the entrance age was predetermined by legislation, chronological age as criterion is included in this review.

Traditionally, chronological age was assumed to be the best predictor of school adjustment and achievement. An example of this assumption was the "drop-in" policy which began in 1871, for initial school entrance in New Zealand. At that time, the government of New Zealand allowed children between the ages of five and 12 to attend public school. A free insurance policy was given to each child enrolled in public school, so as soon as children turned five, their parents sought to have them enrolled in school (Birch, 1970). The question of admission policies was asked then and has been asked ever since in other parts of the world.

New Zealand solved their problem with a "drop-in" policy which permitted children to enroll any time during the year, up to the last week of school, upon having observed a fifth birthday. Through such a policy, all children were treated equally, and there was not a need for developing admission standards for those who were chronologically too young. Proponents of the plan, who frequently fought policy change requests, indicated that the personal/social development of each child was enhanced by this policy. Each child's first day was a special day and that child was the center of attention for that day.

Research from 1934 indicated that educators were questioning the factor of chronological age (CA) as an achievement indicator. Bigelow (1934) studied 88 children who entered first grade before age six and 39 children with beginning school chronological ages of 6.0-6.4. The conclusions were: a child less than 6.0 CA with an IQ of 120 or with a mental age (MA) of 6.4-6.10 will probably succeed in school. If the IQ is less than 110 with a MA of less than 6.0, the child's chances of success are small.

Partington (1937) studied 284 early and regular entrants to grade one and concluded that many children with CAs of 5.0-5.5 achieve well in first grade.

The Bigelow and Partington research studies are indicative of other early findings: some found no differences in achievement while others found older children performing better. Overall, more research pointed toward problems for younger entrants.

Hamalainen (1952) studied 4,277 students of which 16.5% were admitted to kindergarten earlier than chronologically 4.9. From the group of early entrants, 76% adjusted well to kindergarten, while 94% of the later entrants adjusted well.

Hillerich (1976) stated that the correlation of chronological age and reading success is not much better than chance.

While considering the criterion of chronological age, several studies were examined which surveyed school districts regarding entrance age policies. The minimum entrance age found in a majority of school districts was reported by Stemnock (1968) as 4.8-4.9. She found that of 503 school districts surveyed in 1968, 26% allowed for exceptions to the entrance policy. The majority of districts allowing exceptions did so on the basis of "advanced maturity and intelligence as shown by tests or observation". It was interesting to find in this survey from 1962-1968 of districts which enacted changes in entrance policies, 45 moved the dates back and 18 moved them forward. Thirteen districts adopted an early admissions policy and 11 dropped their policy.

The State of Minnesota studied early admissions policies with 115 school districts responding to a survey. Seventy-three districts stated reliance upon a psychologist and individualized testing to determine a child's readiness for early entrance. Twenty-eight districts stated that they conducted an interview with the child, followed by a referral to a psychologist. In 74 districts, parents paid for the psychological testing and the districts paid for the testing in 12 school systems.

Less than half of the districts conducted pre-testing interviews with the child and parents, and only 12 districts had post-testing conferences.

In 11 districts, a child's placement in kindergarten at an earlier than standard age was on a trial basis with a probationary period from four week to three months.

Criteria used for placement in kindergarten were reported as follows:

1. Birthdate cut off
2. Physical maturity- examination by a physician was required in several districts
3. Emotional and social maturity- a few districts reported the use of the Vineland Social Maturity Test, while others used informal observation
4. Academic skills- 24 districts reported academic readiness as a criterion, 14 required a specified level of language development, eight specified reading readiness, while one district used math readiness as a criterion for entrance

5. Appropriate behavior- listed are areas of behavior which were examined:

- ability to follow directions
-superior attention span
-intellectual curiosity
- ability to relate to a test situation
- self direction and independence
- ability to function in a group
- peer relations acceptable
-attitude toward school and learning appropriate.

From a slightly different point of view, Davis, Trimble, & Vincent (1980), investigated the question of the effect of entrance age on school achievement. They studied children who entered school as five year olds and as six year olds and considered test scores for reading, language, and math at the first, fourth, and eighth grades. When differences in mean scores were shown on the Expanded Scale Scores of the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills, they found significant differences in reading on all three age levels favoring the older entrants. The differences of mean scores for math and language were significant in the first and fourth grades also favoring the older entrants.

Davis, Trimble, and Vincent seem to build a case for older entrance ages for school, however, chronological age was the only factor examined in their research. It seems that this approach is a short sighted view of the question of entrance age. There are undoubtedly other factors which must be considered when developing entrance standards.

One study which investigated the social-emotional aspects of early entrance to school was reported by Evans in 1974. He studied entry age and future personal and social adjustment. He selected 304 fourth grade, inner city children from 44 classrooms in 16 schools and determined that 108 had entered kindergarten at CA 4.7-4.8, (Early Entrance-EE), 92 children had entered at CA 5.0-5.1 (Average Entrance-AE) and 104 children had entered at CA 5.5-5.6 (Late Entrance- LE). English was the primary language in each home. The fourth grade teachers completed the Peterson and Quay Behavior Problem Checklist on each child. There were three weighted factors which he studied through multiplying the teachers' responses (0, 1, 2) by the factor loading for each item. Those factors were: conduct disorder, personality disorder, and inadequacy-immaturity. An analysis of variance was conducted on entry age, sex, and conduct subtests. He found differences among entry ages and between sexes on conduct disorders with EEs scoring highest (most problems), AEs scoring next high and LEs with fewest problems. Differences between EEs and AEs or AEs and LEs were not significant, but differences were significant at the $p < .01$ level between the EEs and the LEs.

No significant differences were found on the personality or the inadequacy-immaturity subtests. There were significant differences ($p < .001$)between sexes with males scoring higher.

In 1956, Carter found that younger entrants had more speech referrals, more nervous indications, and more personality and social maladjustments.

Miller (1957) studied 113 children from ages 4.6 to 11.8 and investigated peer acceptance by the use of a sociometric device. There were 30 children in the sixth grade who had an early placement in kindergarten. No differences were found between early and average entrance age children.

As with data from studies of CA, these data are also inconclusive regarding the social-emotional development and school readiness.

Clearly, however, classroom experience speaks loudly in arguing for the need for a social-emotional assessment as a criterion for success in school. Additionally, examination of assessment tools in early childhood education indicates a place of importance for determining social-emotional levels of development. Understanding of body part relationships and a measure of good self-image were sections of the Early Detection Inventory found to be valid early predictors of achievement in reading based on a word recognition test (Abrahamson and Bell, 1979).

In addition to the criteria of designated chronological age and appropriate level of social development, another area found in the literature was physical development.

Hillerich (1976) recommended that auditory and visual acuity be within a normal range. Certainly, efficient use of all senses should be a requirement for early admissions.

Fine and gross motor skills should also be evaluated. Visual-motor integration on the Early Detection Inventory was found to be a positive indicator of success in reading (Abrahamson and Bell, 1979).

Indeed, many readiness tests measure fine motor coordination as well as self-image through a draw-a person test.

The cognitive and conceptual processes of young children should be considered when determining early admissions standards. Cordis (1972) conducted a research study to analyze cognitive processes of four year old children in a preschool setting. Three levels of learning were defined. The association level was characterized by the addition of bits of knowledge to a chain of information. Conceptualization was shown by the child being able to see relationships and abstracting commonalities. Creative self-direction was the third level and was defined as new interpretations occurring from experiences with the previous levels.

Cordis hypothesized: 1) no significant differences would be found between sexes in the three levels of thinking; 2) no significant differences would be found between three and a half and four and a half year old children; and 3) no differences would be found between prekindergarten and kindergarten children. She found that between three and a half and four and a half year old children, there were more girls than boys on the association level, but she found no differences in the other two levels. She found significantly more of the older children on the conceptualization level, but neither age group met the criteria for creative self-direction. When she compared prekindergarten and kindergarten children, she found more kindergarten children functioning on all three levels.

Based on the findings of Cordis, conceptualization probably occurs

around the age of four and a half chronologically. Children who are functioning on this level in kindergarten will definitely have an advantage over those children who are still on the association level. This research effort seems to build a case for categorization skills to be included in the cognitive assessment criteria.

Research reported by Abrahamson and Bell (1979) with the Early Detection Inventory and its predictive value on reading achievement, indicated that a spatial-perceptual orientation to the environment is positively related to reading success. Three concepts related to cognitive ability which are also a part of the Early Detection Inventory are an ability to recognize basic colors, an ability to recognize coins and an ability to count in sequence to 13 and show an understanding of numbers beyond rote counting.

Hillerich (1976) has also been interested in academic readiness and has summarized some correlational data on specific factors in early childhood and reading success. He stated that chronological age correlated with reading at little better than chance. Mental Age/Intelligence Quotient correlated about 20% better than chance with reading success.

Socio-economic status (SES) does not correlate with reading success according to Hillerich. However, in an extensive literature search, Butler (1977) found numerous examples of disadvantaged children performing less well than advantaged children. Abrahamson and Bell (1979) stated that SES "has been recognized as a potent variable determining reading achievement". More research is needed to determine the effects of SES on school achievement.

Hillerich found no clear relationship between reading success and neurological deficits. He stated that reading readiness tests correlated 8-20% better than chance with reading success. He asserted that the judgement of kindergarten teachers regarding children who will be successful with reading is very good, but of course, the judgement cannot be useful for early admissions standards. Hillerich also reported that copying geometric forms has a .41 correlational coefficient with reading success and indicated that the Bender-Gestalt Test and reading achievement correlated at 8% above chance.

With the above comments, Hillerich deemphasized some prevalent ideas regarding indicators for school achievement. He listed several necessities for school success and reading success. They are are follows:

1. Child must "think" in the language
2. Child must master syntax
3. Child must have adequate vocabulary
4. Child must have adequate auditory and visual discrimination skills
5. Child must spend adequate time in direct instruction

Hillerich's Prescriptive-Diagnostic Questionaire (PDQ) tests the following basic concept areas:

1. Auditory discrimination
2. Ability to categorize
3. Relationship words
4. Picture Sequence
5. Closure

A final area of development noted in the literature which is relevant to early admissions standards was language and communication

ability. Hillerich (1976) and Cordis (1972) indicated a need for a measure of language development either by vocabulary recognition or a measure of language in social interaction.

Black(1979) stated that observation of language in an informal setting usually provides more information on the communicative competence of kindergarten children than is given by formal language assessment tools.

Thorough rationale and processes for assessing language competence were not found in the literature even though subtle references reflected the importance of evaluating communication skills. Experience-based judgement from early childhood educators certainly support the need for a language criterion in the assessment process.

In summary, the literature suggested that criteria for early admissions should be established around the following variables:

-chronological age

-social-emotional development

-physical development

-conceptual development

-language skills

With the delineation of the areas from which early admissions criteria should be defined, the committee for the development of early entrance standards continued with an effort to balance the empirical findings with practicality and experience.

Kindergarten teachers and administrators were supportive as sounding boards in several different settings. The consensus was that these variables should be included and that a total procedure for evaluation

should be developed.

The state law had established criteria for the chronological age factor, but criteria had to be specified for the other four areas. Therefore, it was determined that a cut-off standard, based on an appropriate kindergarten age range, should be stated for each area and that it should correspond to a score on a standardized assessment tool.

The procedure which follows was based on the stated criteria and on the specified guidelines related to the validity, reliability, and standardization of the assessment tool.

EARLY ADMISSION TO KINDERGARTEN
READINESS EVALUATION PROCEDURE
1980-81

Introduction

Section 232.04, Florida Statutes, is amended to change the age at which a child will be eligible for admission to public kindergarten. The child must have attained the age of five years on or before December 1, 1980 for the 1980-81 school year. However, any child who will attain the age of five years subsequent to December 1,1980, but prior to January 1, 1981, must be admitted during the first month, provided the child has demonstrated a readiness to enter kindergarten in accordance with criteria established by the district school board.

The five criteria listed below were selected following an exhaustive search of the research literature on early childhood development covering a 45-year period from 1934 through 1979. The first two are relatively objective while the others involve greater degrees of judgment.

1. Chronological Age	Research on chronological age as a factor in school success has spanned 45 years of ambiguous results. The major implication of the research is that chronological age alone is not a satisfactory indicator of school readiness or achievement. Bigelow (1934), Hamalainen (1952), Carter (1959), Miller (1957), Evans (1974)
2. Physical Development	Educational literature supports the need for a normal range of auditory and visual acuity as a predictor of school success. Fine and gross motor skills approximating a five year old level should also be expected. Abrahamson and Bell (1979), Hillerich (1976)
3. Social-Emotional/ Self-Awareness	Studies indicate that young entrants to school may have more social interaction

		problems than later entrants. A good self-image has been found to be an early predictor of achievement in reading. Hamalainen (1952), Carter (1956), Evans (1974), Abrahamson and Bell (1979)
4.	Basic Concepts	Children should be able to understand and categorize relationships, recognize colors and coins, and count with one to one correspondence. Abrahamson and Bell (1979), Hillerich (1976), Cordis (1972)
5.	Language	Communication is essential for success in group situations. A measure of language facility is a strong predictor of school success. Black (1979), Hillerich (1976)

Using the same body of literature as indicated above, specific guidelines were established for the selection of appropriate instruments to measure each of the five early entrance criterion. Other considerations in making the selection included: 1) the instrument must be commercially available; 2) there must be enough information for classroom teachers to properly interpret and use test results; 3) the test must have been in use for a sufficient period of time to establish numerical cut-off norms and meaningful reliability and validity data.

Only three tests measured all of the above criteria and met selection guidelines. From among these, teachers and administrators felt that only one, the Developmental Indicators of Assessment for Learning (DIAL) was superior. Conclusions from predictive validity studies were that DIAL:

1) correlates with accepted and current early childhood theories and opinions regarding developmental progressions for a child's learning pattern
2) provides for training procedures designed and tested by the publishers which will result in sufficiently high reliability of

test administration and scoring procedures and

3) provides a sufficient level of predictability to warrant its use for screening purposes.

The only major restriction of DIAL lies within the area of social-emotional behavior. To eliminate this restriction, the Draw-A-Person test has been included as an additional measure for determining social-emotional readiness for early entrance to kindergarten. The scale for evaluation used in this procedure is based on the five categories used by the Metropolitan Readiness Tests (Hildreth, Griffiths and McGauvran, 1965).

Procedure for Evaluation

A. Public Awareness

The public will be made aware of the evaluation procedure through the local news media.

B. Eligibility

Children who turn five subsequent to December 1, 1980, and prior to January 1, 1981, are required to meet the specified criteria of the readiness evaluation before they are admitted to kindergarten.

C. Application for Evaluation

Application for this evaluation shall be made to the district school board office. All early admission evaluations shall occur within one month prior to the beginning of the school year for pupils and the twentieth day of the school year for pupils. Although placement must be made within the first month of school, it is desirable to have the evaluation completed and allow eligible children to enter kindergarten on the first day. (See Appendix A for application form.)

D. Statement of Evaluation Environment

The early admissions evaluations shall take place in an environment that is as free from distractions as possible, well lighted, and physically comfortable for four year olds. Enough adult supervision shall be available to provide the children with ample help in moving from one station to another.

E. Training of Evaluators

Utilizing the services of a consultant and the DIAL training filmstrip, evaluators shall be trained in the evaluation procedure.

F. Information and Training for Primary Education Specialists

The primary education specialists shall receive an overview of the early entrance screening and be trained in interpretation and use of the results. These specialists will then be available to assist the teacher in planning for a child who enters kindergarten early by meeting the district's early entrance requirements. The specialists will be notified of the children who qualify.

G. Evaluation Instruments

1. DIAL

a. Description

The instrument selected for the 1980-81 school year for assessing the applicants for early entrance into kindergarten is the Developmental Indicators for the Assessment of Learning (DIAL).

b. Standardization Information

DIAL was standardized on 4,400 children in Illinois. The standardization sample was stratified across low and non-low

socio-economic status, urban and rural children of white and non-white races of both sexes.

c. Validity

Concurrent validity data are reported with 85.3% agreement between the results of DIAL and the results of a pupil personnel services team.

d. Reliability Data

For a conclusion on reliability, 250 children were retested a year after the initial testing. Those children who scored in the top and bottom 10% on the first test were identified as being on the same levels in the follow-up.

e. Cut-Off Standards

The four subtests of gross motor skills, fine motor skills, concepts, and communication give age comparability scores of 2.5 and 5.5 years. The cut-off standards for early admission to kindergarten are a minimum of 4.9 years on each of the subtests.

2. Draw-A-Person

a. Description

The only major restriction of DIAL lies within the area of assessing social-emotional behavior. Due to this restriction, the Draw-A-Person Test has been included as an additional measure for determining social-emotional readiness for early entrance to kindergarten. The Draw-A-Person Test is based on Goodenough-Harris Draw-A-Man Test which has been used as a predictor of school readiness. The scale for evaluation used

in this procedure is based on five categories used by the Metropolitan Readiness Test.

b. Cut-Off Standards

Category D has been determined to approximate a kindergarten level for the Draw-A-Person Test. The cut-off standard requires the inclusion of six of the following seven features on the drawn person: arms, legs, trunk, head, mouth, eyes, hair.

H. Evaluation Criteria

1. Social-Emotional Development

Studies indicate that young entrants to school may have more social interaction problems than later entrants. A good self-image has been found to be an early predictor of achievement in reading.

Requirements	Cut-Off Standard
a. A social-emotional checklist of 12 social-interaction skills has been condensed into six items. The child will be evaluated through the observation of the social interaction skills of: 1) willingness to separate from parent 2) willingness to try tasks 3) cooperative behavior 4) willingness to answer questions 5) absence of crying/whining 6) absence of distractibility	a. The six social interaction skills shall be observed by two or more evaluators.

b. The child will be evaluated on performance on the Draw-A-Person Test.	b. Six out of the seven body parts listed must be present: arms, legs, trunk, head, mouth, eyes, and hair. Examples:

2. Physical Development

Education literature supports the need for normal range of auditory and visual acuity as a predictor of school success. Fine and gross motor skills approximating a five year old level should also be expected.

Requirements	Cut-Off Standards
a. Near and Far Point Visual Screening Visual screening will be administered using the near and far point subtests of the Peek-a-Boo Keystone Telebinocular.	a. The child shall pass both subtests.
b. Auditory Screening An audiometer shall be used,	b. The child shall be able to hear 20 decibel

calibrated to the ISO level of 1964.	sound volume at 500, 1000, 2000, and 4000 cycles per second with each ear.
c. Gross Motor Development The child's performance of throwing, catching, jumping, hopping, skipping, standing still, and balancing will be evaluated with the DIAL.	c. A boy shall attain a score of 15 out of 21 points according to the DIAL scoring scale. A girl shall attain a score of 16 out of 21 points according to the DIAL scoring scale.
d. Fine Motor Development The child's performance of visual matching, block building, cutting, copying, small muscle agility, and pattern/tempo reproduction will be evaluated with the DIAL.	d. A boy shall attain a score of 15 out of 21 points according to the DIAL scoring scale. A girl shall attain a score of 16 points out of 21 according to the DIAL scoring scale.

3. Basic Concepts

The child should be able to understand and categorize relationships, recognize colors and coins, and count with one-to-one correspondence.

Requirements	Cut-Off Standard
a. The child's performance of sorting blocks, naming colors,	a. A boy shall attain a score of 15 out of 21

counting, positioning, following directions, and identifying body parts will be evaluated with the DIAL.	points according to the DIAL scoring scale. A girl shall attain a score of 16 out of 21 points according to the DIAL scoring scale.

4. Language Development - Communications

Communication is essential for success in group situations. A measure of language facility is a strong predictor of school success.

Requirements	Cut-Off Standard
a. The child's articulation short-term memory, expressive/ receptive use of nouns and verbs, problem solving, self-identification, classification, and storytelling performance will be evaluated with the DIAL.	a. A boy shall attain a score of 15 out of 21 points according to the DIAL scoring scale. A girl shall attain a score of 16 out of 21 points according to the DIAL scoring scale.

I. Parent Information

At any time the parent may withdraw the child from the evaluation procedures. A member of the DIAL evaluation team shall notify each child's parent/guardian in writing of the results of the evaluation, and the educational recommendations of the team. The parents of children who qualify for entrance into school may wish to schedule a conference with the principal. The parents of children who do not qualify for entrance into school may wish to schedule a conference with the early childhood

coordinator to review the results of the evaluation. (See Appendixes B, C, and D.)

J. Monitoring and Procedures

The DIAL evaluation procedure will be monitored by the evaluation team with input from the principals, assistant principals, primary education specialists, kindergarten teachers, and parents to evaluate and follow-up the results. Recommendation for continued use of the DIAL will be considered the following spring.

APPENDIX A

APPLICATION FOR EARLY ENTRANCE EVALUATION

This application should be completed only by those who feel that their child demonstrates sufficient physical, emotional, and social maturity as well as academic potential to be considered for early admission to kindergarten.

(PLEASE PRINT)

Child's Name _____
(Last) (First) (Middle)

Child's Date of Birth _____

Parent or Guardian's Name _____

Telephone Number _____

Address _____
(Street) (City) (Zip Code)

Public school child is to attend _____

Preschool previously attended (if any) _____

I am making application for _____.
(Child's Name)
to be evaluated in order to determine the appropriateness of his/her entering kindergarten earlier than usual. I grant permission for the evaluation of my child and I will be available for conferences regarding the results.

_____ _____
(Date) (Parent or Guardian's Signature)

APPLICATION MUST BE RETURNED BY _____

APPENDIX B

Sample letter to parents of children who have not met the criteria for early entrance into kindergarten following evaluation procedures.

Dear _____:

As you requested, your child has completed the initial readiness evaluation measure for determining appropriate placement in the public school kindergarten program.

After careful evaluation of the test results, it was determined that your child has not met the requirements for entrance into kindergarten.

We hope you will view this evaluatiion of your child as an assurance of the special care which has been taken in the appropriate placement of your child.

If you wish to discuss the evaluation results and learn of appropriate home activities to use with your child please make an appointment with the early childhood coordinator.

Sincerely,

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APPENDIX C

Sample letter to parents of children who have met the criteria for entrance into the kindergarten program following the DIAL evaluation procedures.

Dear _____:

As you requested, your child has completed the initial readiness evaluation measure for determining appropriate placement in the public school kindergarten program.

After careful evaluation of the test results, it was determined that your child has met the requirements for entrance into kindergarten this school year. We hope you will view this evaluation of your child as an assurance of the special care which has been taken in appropriate placement.

We will look forward to having your child in our kindergarten program this school year and will notify the school principal of his/her eligibility. You may wish to schedule a conference with the principal to discuss your child's placement.

If you have any questions regarding this decision, please contact the early childhood coordinator.

Sincerely,

APPENDIX D

Suggested conference guidelines for use with parents whose children did not reach the appropriate cut-off level.

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1. Share parents' concern about wanting the most appropriate educational placement for their child.

2. Review district requirements for early entrance into kindergarten.

3. Report child's areas of strength and indicate areas in which child needs opportunities to progress. Suggest specific activities parents could use to strengthen child's weak areas.

4. Provide opportunity for questions about the kindergarten program and the early entrance evaluation procedure in general.

5. Close conference looking forward to having the parents' continued support for and with the school's educational program.

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